

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 CAPE T 00337 081141Z
ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 OMB-01 /080 W
-----081151Z 070677 /20

R 071042Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5801
INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CAPE TOWN 0337

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SF PINT
SUBJ: ASSESSMENT OF MARCH 2 LOCAL ELECTION RESULTS

REFS: CAPE TOWN 0317 (NOTAL), JOHANNESBURG 0485 (NOTAL,
PRETORIA 1056 (NOTAL)

RQM SUMMARYIK CONFIRMING THE CONSERVATIVE MOOD OXP THE
ELECTORATE, THE MARCH 2 LOCAL ELECTION RESULTS
DEMONSTRATED ENHANCED VOTER SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL
PARTY. THE UNITED PARTY DEFEAT IN ALL AREAS IS EXPECTED
TO SPEED ITS DEMISE. THE PROGRESSIVE REFORM PARTY,
ALTHOUGH REGISTERING HINDS, EXHIBITED ITS LIMITED APPEAL
BY DOING LESS WELL THAN EXPECTED. THE VORSTER GOVERNMENT
HAS REASON FOR SATISFACTION WITH THE ELECTIONS WHILE THE
NEEDING FUNDAMENTAL RESTRUCTURING OF THE POLITICAL
OPPOSITION HAS ONCE MORE BEEN DEMONSTRATED. END SUMMARY

2. THE NATIONAL PARTY MADE AN IMPRESSIVE SHOWING IN
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 CAPE T 00337 081141Z

THE MARCH 2 TRANSVAAL MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS AND THE
DURBANVILLE BY-ELECTION FOR A CAPE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL
SEAT. IN DURBANVILLE THE NP CANDIDATE WON A LANDSLIDE
VICTORY IN A THREE-WAY RACE WITH APPROXIMATELY 77 PERCENT OF
THE 10,671 VOTES CAST, COMPARED TO ABOUT 65 PERCENT IN THE
TWO-WAY RACE AGAINST THE UP IN 1974. THE NP RECEIVED 1,560
VOTES MORE THAN IN 191: WHILE THE OPPOSITION CONTINUED

DECLINED BY NEARLY 500. IN THE RANDBURG MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS, THE NP WON 8 OF THE 10 SEATS ON THE PREVIOUSLY UP-CZVNTROLLED (UP - 8; NP - 2) COUNCIL. THE UP HAVING LEFT THE FIELD, IT WWG A STRAIGHT NP-PRP CONTEST. IN THE JOHANNESBURG MUNICIPAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS, THE NP REGISTERED THE LARGEST GAIN, UP FROM 10 TO 15 SEATS. THE UP DROPPED FROM 19 TO 11 SEATS AND THE PRP FELL SHORT OF EXPECTATIONS IN MOVING UP FROM 16 TO 19. WITH THE NP SHOWING THE GREULEST ADVANCES, THE PATTERN WAS SIMILAR IN OTHER TRANSVAAL MUNICIPALITIES.

3. THE NP TURNOUT WAS BASED FIRSTLY ON STRONRAPPEAL TO THE SOLIDARITY OF AFRIKANERS AND ON THE PARTY'S USUAL EFFECTIVE MOBILIZATION OF THEIR VOTES. SECONDLY, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT MANY UP SUPPORTERS, PREDOMINANTLY ENGLISH SPEAKERS, WERE SO DISILLUSIONED BY THE DIS-ARRAY IN THEIR PARTY AND SUSUSPICIOUS OF THE PRP THAT THEY TURNED TO THE NP. AMONG THESE WOULD BE CONYERVATIVE UP ADEARENTS ALREADY MORE OR LESS IN SYMPATHY WITH NP POLICIES.

4. DESPITE MODEST SUCCESS IN SEVERAL LOCALITIES, THE PRP DID NOT LIVE UP TO WHAT HAD BEEN EXPECTED OF IT. IT PROVED TO HAVE NO APPEAL FOR DISAFFECTED NATIONALISTS AND ITS GAINS WERE MUCH LESS DUE TO ITS OWN DRAWING POWER THAN A CONSEQUENCE OF THE DISINTEGRATION OF THE UP. EVEN THEN THE PRP WAS OUTCLASSED BY THE NP IN REAPING THE BENEFITS OF UPBS TROUBLES.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 CAPE T 00337 081141Z

5. UP LOSSES IN ALL AREAS WILL PRESUHABLY HASTEN THE PARTY'S DEMISE. THE MOOD AMONG UP MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT IS DESPONDENT) PARTY LEADER G-AFF ASSERTS WAT THE ELECTIONS REAFFIRMED THE RIGHTNESS OF HIS EFFORTS TO RECONSTRUCT THE OPPOSITION, BUT FEWER ADD FEWER OSHIS OLD COLLEAGUES ARE LIKELY TO TAKE THEIR LEAD FROM HIM. IN THE CAMPAIGN, THE NP CORRECTLY ANTICIPATED THE UP DEBACLE AND, IGNORING THE UP, DIRDCED ITS FIRE EXCLUSIVELY AGAINST THE PRP.

6. THOUGH THE ELECTIONS OF MARCH 2 WERE ONLY A PARTIAL 53ST OF THE MOOD OF THE WHITE ELECTORATE, PRIME MINISTER VORSTER AND HIS PARTY HAVE REASON TO BE SATISFIED WITH THE RESULTS. VORSTER CALLED THE OUTCOME AN "OVERWHELMIN" MANDATE. IT WOULD BE IMPRODENT, HOWEVER, TO CONCLUDE FROM THIS LIMIT SAMPLING THAT THE ELECTORATE WAS EXPRESSING WHOLEHEARTED SATISFACTION WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES. AMONG THE DETEMINANTS AT THE POLLS WERE AFRIKANER SOLIDARITY, THE CONFUSION AND

FRACTIONALIZATION IN THE UNITED PARTY, AND THE WEAKNESS
OF THE PROGRESSIEE REFORM PARTY'S APPEAL. DURING THE
CAMPAIGN THE NP IGNORED THE UP AND MOUNTED A PARTICULARLY
SEVERE ATTACK ON THE PRP, RAISIN QUESTIONS ABOUT ITS
PROBLMS TO SOUTH AFRICA AND EQUATING ITS POLICY TOWARD
BLACKS AS EQUIVALENT TO ACCEPTING BLACK RULE. THE
ELECTIONS UNDERSCORED THE BASIC CONSERVATISM OF THE
SOUTH AFRICAN WHI E ELECTORATE AND THE UPHILL BATTLE
THE PRP FACES IN CONVINCING VOTERS TO SUPPORT EVEN ITS
LIMITED VIEWS ON POWER SHARING. THE PRP WAS HOPING TO
PICK UP MORE UP VOTES AND TO ATTRACT SOME AFRIKANERS WHO
ARE GENUINELY CONCERNED ABOUT THE INFLEXIBILITY OF NP POLICY.
THEY WERE DISAPPOINTED ON BOTH SCORES.BOWDLER

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION RESULTS, PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 07-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977CAPET00337
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770079-0350
Format: TEL
From: CAPE TOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770387/aaaacyuc.tel
Line Count: 129
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 245b81bc-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 CAPE TOWN 317, 77 JOHANNESBURG 485
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3190248
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ASSESSMENT OF MARCH 2 LOCAL ELECTION RESULTS
TAGS: PINT, SF
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/245b81bc-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009